

New leadership for Local 888

Members elect leadership for changing times

Local 888's officer election has concluded with 1,698 ballots cast to elect new leadership.

Brenda Rodrigues was elected President, **Tom McKeever** was elected Secretary-Treasurer, **Anita Christon** was re-elected Recording Secretary. These candidates were all part of the Leadership for Changing Times slate.



Local 888 New Leadership Team

Brenda Rodrigues, President
Tom McKeever, Secretary-Treasurer
Anita Christon, Recording Secretary

Trustees:

Susan Winning, UMass Lowell
Lori Moran, Watertown
Bill Lapsley, Mass Lottery

Executive Board:

Kwesi Ablordeppey, Holyoke Soldiers Home
Darcie Boyer, UMass Lowell
Gina Capone, Town of Winchester
Carolyn Carey, Town of Harwich
Jim Corcoran, Town of Mashpee
Margaret (Peggy) Fitzgibbons, Town of Plymouth
Jayne Fogarty, Town of Yarmouth
Diane Foley, Town of Weymouth
Enio Lopez, Chelsea Soldiers Home
Emmanuel Marsh, Mass State Lottery
Kevin Nascimento, Brockton Public Library
David Reno, Boston Police Department
Damali Simmonds, Boston Water & Sewer Comm
Jennifer Reynolds, Town of Amherst
Teresa Riordan, Town of Westwood
Fred Simmons, City of Haverhill
LaToya Weaver, Boston Center Youth & Families
Pam Willard, Town of Westborough



Local 888 retained MK Election Services to conduct the election. Above on left, a representative explains the ballot count procedure to observers on March 3.

Brenda and her team ran on the slogan “*No chapter too small, no problem too big.*” In a message to members she stated, “SEIU Local 888 needs new leadership who will be more aggressive in defending our contracts, more responsive to our members and willing to provide staff with the resources they need to accomplish our goals.”

Local 888 would like to thank the Election Committee for their work overseeing the process. Thank you to **Gordan Luciano** (chair), **Meta Jones**, **Lenny DiBartolomeo** and alternate **Kathleen Porrazzo**.

See page 2 for more on the election.

For full election results, go to seiu888.org/888members/elections.



An interview with President-elect Brenda Rodrigues

Q: Your slate was called Leadership for Changing Times. Members voted for a change in leadership. What are the first steps you will take to usher in change for the membership?

I am beginning a listening tour to hear from our members across the state. I want to visit members in small and large groups and learn about their jobs, what they do every day, and what issues we can work on together to improve worker power. I hope this listening tour will open the doors to better communication between rank-and-file members and union leadership. One of the biggest things we have to address is the changing environment for unions, which will require better listening and improved communications.

In the upcoming months we will focus on staff and member training, reorganizing our office to allow staff to more efficiently and effectively do their daily jobs. One good sign: we've recently had staff and members sign up for Labor Guild classes.

Q: Change won't happen overnight. What can members do to help you achieve the vision that they voted for?

My big focus is listening and building relationships. Members can help their union by building stronger relationships with their co-workers, and backing each other up on the job. Our union is facing huge challenges. For one, we have more than 200 chapters from the Cape to Springfield. It's a lot of ground to cover, so I want to enlist the Executive Board and other members to help. Another major challenge is the nationwide effort to decimate unions and to take away people's benefits. The Janus v. AFSCME case is one example. If we don't start building stronger relationships between ourselves now, it's going to be too late.

Q: What changes will you make that will impact members' day to day lives?

I plan to take a hard look at the current staff set up. I want to find out, do we need more organizers or field staff? If someone isn't getting their phone call answered I will find out why. Last week I talked to a member who told me of not being able to find out how many bereavement days he was entitled to after his father passed away. He didn't know his staff representative, steward, or chapter chair and couldn't find this information anywhere. I plan to set up a member "hotline" where members can call in and get questions answered quickly.

Q: Is there anything else you would like to share?

Throughout my campaign, I met so many members across the state who inspired me with their commitment to their jobs and our union. Our members are working so hard to provide quality public services, to do their jobs well and to maintain fair working conditions for each other.

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New leadership and unity moving forward

"I have authorized Secretary-Treasurer and President-elect Brenda Rodrigues to begin leading the local immediately," said President Mark DelloRusso. "We are working cooperatively to make decisions in the best interests of our members to keep Local 888 moving forward."

Local 888's field reps and staff will remain on the job and continue their work as assigned. President-elect Rodrigues has appointed Rand Wilson (former Organizing and Communications Director) to lead the transition for the new administration and assume the role of Chief of Staff effective immediately.



**Watch an
inspiring video
from Feb. 26 day
of action at
SEIU.org/WeRise**

Scenes from #WeRise Workers' Day of Action



LAWRENCE: President Brenda Rodrigues, SEIU International President Mary Kay Henry, and Local 888 members Carlos Morel and Pedro Ayala.



SOMERVILLE: Local 888 members rallied along with Somerville Municipal employees, firefighters, and community groups.



BROCKTON: Brockton library members Jonathan Stroud, Laura Vivada, Anne Fleming and Diana Cruz participate in #WeRise.

Defending the defenders

Public defenders across Massachusetts are demanding the same collective bargaining rights that all other state employees have. While they are state employees, the state law omitted their right to collectively bargain and organize. *This lack of fairness, along with low pay and a lack of predictable career paths, creates high turnover and instability.* On March 6, public defenders rallied across the state for their right to collectively bargain.



Public Defender Makis Antzoulatos (pictured above) who works for CPCS at the Boston Superior Court spoke at the Boston #WeRise rally about how our politicians and our courts shouldn't be trying to limit our power in numbers. "Lawyers and legal workers at the public defender agency deserve the right to collectively bargain. This will benefit them as workers and the communities they serve," said Antzoulatos.

Mashpee custodian wins back his job with solidarity from teachers

A custodian at Mashpee High School won back his job after he was wrongfully moved to a different shift at another school following an incident with a student. Union staff won the grievance and the case was helped with an impressive show of union solidarity from supportive teachers at the school, who brought a petition to the town manager's office requesting they keep their custodian who they say is very "well and widely respected." When working people stand together, we win! The victory was an example of a union's "just cause" protections in action.

Picture yourself working at Emerson



At prospective students day at Emerson College, Emerson staff members wore picture frames highlighting the issues they face working at Emerson. All eyes are on Emerson to negotiate a first contract in a timely manner!

Support Emerson staff by signing their petition to urge management to expedite the negotiation process! **Sign here:** goo.gl/QRKxcP

Coming Attractions



Greater Boston Labor Council Legislative Breakfast

Monday, April 9, 8:30-10am
Omni Parker House Hotel
60 School Street Boston

Merrimack Valley Community Briefing for Paid Family & Medical Leave and a \$15 Minimum Wage

Saturday, March 17, 1pm
Lawrence Public Library
51 Lawrence St, Lawrence
Register: bit.ly/raiseuplawrence

Save our buses! Stop the cuts Rally to save public transit

Tuesday, March 20, 5-8pm
Worcester City Hall
Sponsored by ATU Local 22

SEIU Candidate Forum for 3rd Congressional District

Saturday, April 7
Location TBA

MassCOSH's 41st Annual Celebrating the Movement

Thursday, April 12, 6-8:30pm
89 South St, Boston

Boston Labor Conference: Labor Organizing, Political Power, & the Trump Effect

Saturday, Apr 14, 2018 8:30-1:30pm
UMass Boston Labor Resource Center
Register here: <http://conta.cc/2FOrsOi>

Workers' Memorial Day

Friday, Apr 27, 12-1pm
Massachusetts State House
24 Beacon St Boston

Swearing-in ceremony for Officers and Executive Board members

Tuesday, May 1, Location TBA

Gubernatorial Candidate Forum

Saturday, June 16, Location TBA

What's behind Janus v. AFSCME?

The CEOs who have rigged our economy want to make it even harder for working people to get by. They want to use the Supreme Court to take away our freedom to join strong unions. Unions fight for real freedoms like having a decent living that results from hard work, having the time to take a loved one to the doctor or to attend a parent-teacher conference, and having the ability to retire with dignity.

Unions keep the CEOs and their special interests in check because they provide everyday working people with the power in numbers needed to improve our lives and our communities. When unions are strong, everyone benefits.

From a letter to the editor by President-elect Brenda Rodrigues

